

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1056
INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON
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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT PO
SUBJ: MIRN MAKES MODEST OPORTO DEBUT

REF: A) LISBON 9699 221255Z DEC 77

B) OPORTO 0132 281607Z APR 77

1. SMALL VOCAL TEENAGE TURNOUT. KAULZA DE ARRIAGA'S INDEPENDENT MOVEMENT FOR NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION (MIRN) HELD ITS FIRST PUBLIC RALLY JANUARY 20 IN THE OPORTO COLISEUM. ACCORDING TO AMCONSUL OBSERVER, THE TURNOUT WAS SMALL, FILLING LESS THAN 1000 OF THE 3000-SEAT COLISEUM. MANY PARTICIPANTS WERE VOCAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WELL-ORGANIZED AND MILITANT WHO CONTINUALLY CHEERED AND CHANTED "DEATH TO THE TRAITORS AND THE ULTRAMAR IS PORTUGUESE." NO LOCAL FIGURES FROM ANY DEMOCRATIC PARTY WERE OBSERVED AT THE MEETING. JOINING RETIRED GENERAL ARRIAGA ON THE PODIUM WERE SEVERAL EX-MILITARY OFFICERS AND AREA BUSINESSMEN OF LITTLE PROMINENCE.

2. PATRIOTIC APPEAL. SPEECHES WERE LONG ON PATRIOTISM AND SHORT

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ON SUBSTANCE WITH HEAVY CRITICISM OF THE "SELL-OUT TO THE COMMUNISTS" OF FORMER PORTUGUESE OVERSEAS POSSESSIONS. THE NEW PS/CDS POLITICAL AGREEMENT WAS TERMED "BANKRUPT" LEAVING AN HONEST" PRESIDENT HOLDING THE BAG. IN HIS KEY-NOTE ADDRESS, MIRN PRESIDENT ARRIAGA STRESSED THE OVERSEAS BETRAYAL THEME AND HIS READINESS TO LEAD A NATIONAL REBIRTH. ARRIAGA ALSO PRAISED THAT LOYAL PART OF THE PORT-

UGUESE ARMED FORCES SYMBOLIZED BY THE COMMANDOS AND NEW
PARATROOP REGIMENT AS WELL AS POLICE AND NATIONAL GUARD.

3.) POLITICAL MISCELLANY. THE SOCIALISTS UNDERTOOK AN
INTENSE SERIES OF WEEKEND PARTY MEETINGS IN AT LEAST 8
NORTHERN CITIES TO EXPLAIN PS POLICIES IN THE WAKE OF THE
PS/CDS AGREEMENTS. CDS CIRCLES IN THE NORTH SEEM TO BE RESTING
FOR THE MOMENT ON THE WORDS OF PARTY LEADER FREITAS DO AMARAL
WHO MADE WHAT LOCAL CDS SOURCES CONSIDER TO BE A HIGHLY
SUCCESSFUL TV INTERVIEW JANUARY 19. ON THE FAR LEFT, RECON-
STRUCTED COMMUNISTS PCP(R) HELD A DEMONSTRATION JANUARY
22 TO CELEBRATE THE SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF THE "RECONSTRUCT-
ION" OF THE PCP. UDP ASSEMBLY DEPUTY ACACIO BARREIROS WAS IN-
VITED GUEST SPEAKER AND BROUGHT CHEERS FROM CROWD OF SEVERAL
THOUSAND WHO PARTLY FILLED OPORTO'S CRYSTAL PALACE WITH
HIS ATTACKS ON THE RIGHT AND THE LEFT. HE CALLED NEW GOVERN-
MENT A "CDS GOVERNMENT WITH PS PERSONALITIES."

4.) COMMENT: SINCE SPRING 1977 (REFTEL B), ARRIAGA HAS HELD
OCCASIONAL DINNERS AND PRIVATE MEETINGS THROUGHOUT THE
NORTH. FOR HIS EFFORTS THUS FAR HE SEEMS TO HAVE ATTRACTED
ONLY A BUNCH OF KIDS, SOME REFUGEES AND A HANDFUL OF CON-
SERVATIVE BUSINESSMEN WHO PROBABLY BANKROLLED THE COLISEUM
RALLY. FOLLOWING ON THE HEELS OF THE ANNOUNCED PS/CDS
AGREEMENT, THE RALLY WAS A TEST OF MIRN'S ATTRACTION TO
CDS VOTERS DISPLEASED WITH THE AGREEMENT. THEY STAYED HOME.
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MIRN SEEMS DESTINED AT THIS TIME TO ONLY PLAY A ROLE,
POSSIBLY VIOLENT, IN THE RADICALIZATION OF NORTHERN YOUTH.
THE FAR RIGHT STILL NEEDS SOMEONE BESIDES ARRIAGA TO MAKE
AN IMPACT AMONG PORTUGUESE VOTERS AS AMEMBASSY LISBON EARLIER
OBSERVED (REFTEL A, PARA 5). PENNER

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